3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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It was the fathers who decided at what age a child should go to school, and having once enrolled the boy or girl and paid the fees, the fathers insisted on regular attendance. 593 [872]

All Ngoni fathers showed affection for their young children, some consistently and others when it occurred to them. They picked them up and carried them about, held their hand while they tried their first steps, listened to their attempts to speak correctly, held them in their arms when they sat on the veranda. In one village twin boys aged four were devoted to their father and he to them. When he walked about, he held a hand of each. When he sat on the veranda they were always beside him and he had an arm round each. When he was elsewhere, the twins wandered about the compound disconsolately, hand in hand, rejecting the advances of their nurse girls and uncertain what to do until he appeared again.

Ngoni fathers had to be consulted in cases of sickness when the grandmother's remedies had failed and specialist help was needed. Then the father and his brothers and their father decided whether to summon a diviner or a herbalist, and arranged for the throwing of lots or the search for 'medicines', and paid the agreed fee when the cure worked. 593 757

It was part of Ngoni tradition to keep the knowledge of death away from young children. The father was held responsible for seeing that his children were kept away from the hut where the corpse was awaiting burial, and from the funeral itself. When men and women of leading Ngoni families were buried at the edge of the kraal, and the fence enlarged so that the cattle stamped over the grave, the explanation given (though it was not the only reason) was that 'the young children should not know or fear death in this village'. 593 764 858

The physical surroundings of the small child

The two diagrams, overleaf, illustrate the layout of the hut and compound in typical Ngoni households. Some of these 342 351

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863 of dust, and many of them began to suffer from sores, itch and sore eyes. The girls however, had already begun to like a clean and shining skin for the sake of being beautiful, and their ablutions were no longer under duress.

The smallest children urinated and defecated wherever they happened to be. From the age of three or four, however, they were taught to tell someone if they wanted to defecate, and taken outside the hut. Maize cobs or soft leaves or grass were used to clean the child, and then thrown on the fire. When the child began to look after himself, he was shown how to use the left hand only when cleaning himself, [826] and told it was 'the hand of shame, only used for bad things'. From the age of four or five small girls and boys went with [514] their mothers and the other women to the section of the surrounding bush reserved for the women's toilet. At about the same age boys and girls were taught to withdraw from the public gaze when urinating, and to conceal themselves behind a hut or in some other hiding-place. The Ngoni were [514] extremely prudish about all physical acts connected with [834] evacuating or sex, and began to demand correct behaviour from children at an early age.

● 757 If a child was constipated, or had diarrhoea, or was vomiting, or had a fever or stomach-ache, the nurse girl reported 603 it to his mother who went to tell the child's paternal grandmother. For all the range of usual childish ailments the grandmother prescribed and carried out standard treatments, such as whey used as a purgative, or very thin gruel to check diarrhoea. The Ngoni women had a number of herbal remedies which they used for themselves and their children. They also used hot poultices, cupping, and forms of massage. Only when the known household remedies failed, did the grandmother tell the child's father and he, as we have seen, took the responsibility for calling in 'specialists'.

867 Sleep, the little child's third major need, was sometimes well ordered and sometimes erratic. It was not considered 864 proper for children to sleep in the same hut as their parents